

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: August 19, 2004

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:03 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:16 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Monroe Gray, Jr., Chair
Bob Cockrum
Susie Day
Ron Gibson
Dane Mahern
William Oliver
Earl Salisbury

Absent Members

2005 Budget Hearing

Resource Development Division
Golf Division
Greenways Division
Park Rangers Division

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

The Parks and Recreation Committee of the City-County Council met on Thursday, August 19, 2004. Chair Monroe Gray, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. with the following members present: Bob Cockrum, Susie Day, Dane Mahern, William Oliver, and Earl Salisbury. Arriving shortly thereafter was Ron Gibson. Representing Council staff was Kent Burrow, Chief Financial Officer.

Resource Development Division

Joseph Wynns, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), explained that the Resource Development Division oversees planning, design, construction, property management, and real estate/land acquisition. He noted that this division has not seen any major reduction.

Don Colvin, Administrator, Resource Development Division, referred to page 268 of the City Budget Book. There are slight adjustments in Character 01 that reflect current spending in group insurance. He explained that his budget is predominantly Capital budget. He said that at the beginning of the year the Capital budget is written into Characters 02, 03, and 04. As projects are implemented, these dollars are transferred back into project objects which explains funding increases and decreases in these characters. He added that any balances remaining will be used by the end of the year. Character 02 remains flat. He referred to Subobject 335 (Information Technology) in Character 03. This is computer supplies for staff, based on current guidelines set by the City. He referred to Subobject 350 (Facility Lease and Rentals) and stated that this particular funding is for retaining the rights to the Wright property and the opportunities to purchase it.

Chair Gray asked about Subobject 300 (Professional Services), which has always been a big part of the budget. He asked why it currently shows nothing. Mr. Colvin answered that DPR has been able to work with the Controller's Office whenever there is a need for a contractual service, and he is now able to use Character 04 for this funding instead.

Chair Gray asked about the large amount of funding in Character 04, Subobject 405 (Buildings). Mr. Colvin responded that DPR has completed the Lilly projects, plus the rest of the Capital budget, so it is not all professional services.

Mr. Colvin explained that Character 04, Subobject 400 (Land) consists of the taxes DPR pays for properties donated to DPR. Under Character 04, Total Properties and Equipment, Mr. Colvin explained this is a Lilly grant interest and various other grants that were appropriated into this budget.

[Clerk's Note: Councillor Gibson arrived at this time 5:17 p.m.]

Councillor Cockrum asked about Character 04, Subobject 410 (Improvements). Noting an increase, he asked if this is tied in with the Lilly grant. Mr. Colvin answered in the affirmative. Addressing Subobject 400 (Land), Councillor Cockrum stated that last year the Committee was told by the Deputy Controller that there was \$500,000 set aside in the County General Fund for

the Wright property. He asked what the current situation is. Mr. Wynns stated there are no monies in this year's or next year's budget that have been allocated in DPR for the purpose of the property.

Golf Division

Lou Hurrle, Golf Administrator, discussed "The First Tee", a project he has been working on. This project will be located at 25th and Monon. He noted that Councillor Jackie Nytes has been very helpful and supportive in this project. He explained that nationally there are approximately 140 First Tee facilities across the country, along with 334 affiliate relationships to the chapter. He said that DPR's 13 golf courses will be affiliates to the local First Tee chapter. He noted that there are over 300,000 children who participate across the country. The oversight committee and participating groups include: The Professional Golf Association (PGA) Tour, the United States Golf Association (USGA), the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour, and the Augusta Ashland Golf Club. Their mission is to impact the lives of young people by providing learning facilities and educational programs that promote character development and life-enhancing values through the game of golf.

Mr. Hurrle referred to page 264 of the City Budget book. He said the major change is in Character 01, Subobject 130 (Group Insurance). He referred to Character 02, Subobject 210 (Materials and Supplies), and said they were planning construction on a facility, but it has not started, so the money will be there for next year. Character 03, Subobjects 306 (Architectural and Engineering Services) and 321 (Waste Collection and Disposal), were set aside for environmental issues at some golf courses. Some of the money was spent, and this is based on how it was taken out. It is budgeted more appropriately for next year so anticipated expenses will come out of the proper Subobject. Subobject 309 (Technical Services) is increased this year, but will be decreased next year, because they will not need to do appraisal of land services.

Councillor Cockrum noted that through the first six months DPR has collected less than \$400,000 out of \$1.3 million. He asked if this is seasonal. Mr. Hurrle responded that the heaviest months of revenue are June, July, and August. Councillor Cockrum asked if there are any penalties if a contractor does not make payments on time. Mr. Hurrle said that there are no penalties at this time, but this may be a possibility in the future.

Chair Gray noted that although Indianapolis has some of the least expensive green fees of any golf course (compared with Chicago or Cincinnati, for example), the courses have great quality.

Mr. Hurrle pointed out Character 04, Subobject 440 (Infrastructure), noting that DPR did exceed this year's budgeted item, and nothing is proposed for next year. He said all of the money for Capital improvements were put into one line item, Subobject 410. There are no major changes in Character 05.

Chair Gray credited much of the success of this program to Thaddeus Gray, a former PGA pro at Douglass Park, and noted that he was a pioneer for the First Tee program. Mr. Wynns also credited Paul Jones, former Councillor, for his dedication to the program.

Greenways Division

Ray Irvin, Greenways Administrator, summarized that Greenways manages over 5,000 linear acres of Greenways in Marion County. He said there are over 66 miles of trails, plus DPR is in the process of building over 327 miles of on-street bike route systems throughout the County. This is all accomplished by a staff of four, and they rely on their Development Committee and work with the Greenways Foundation, which works to raise funds. He said that for every dollar that taxpayers have put into Greenways, DPR has raised an additional \$4 to \$5 annually through grants, partnerships, and alliances. He added that there is an ongoing relationship with the Department of Public Works that takes care of maintenance.

Mr. Irvin referred to page 262 of the City Budget Book and noted that the total budget for 2004 is \$825,914. The proposed 2005 budget is \$829,228, a slight increase. He explained that Characters 01 through 04 are flat and should remain that way next year.

Councillor Cockrum referred to Character 03, Subobject 306 (Architectural Engineering Services), and noted that the 2004 budget is \$21,525. As of June 30th, year-to-date spending is at \$64,515. Mr. Irvin answered that in this particular line item they were short of capital improvement dollars this year on projects that were ongoing.

Mr. Wynns introduced Matt Klein, President, Indianapolis Greenways Foundation. Mr. Klein commented that Greenways has continued to grow rapidly, and he encouraged the Council to continue promotion and connection of Greenways.

Mr. Irvin added that Greenways has been approached by Indiana University's Department of Sociology who is interested in working on a study of the social aspect of trails. He said that they anticipate 2.75 million user visits on the trails this next year. He said there are 30 laser counters on all the trails, and there is huge progress, which obviously has attracted IU's interest.

Park Rangers Division

Mr. Wynns summarized that the Park Rangers fall under the supervision of the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD), through Major Ernie Hudson, and are trained through the IPD academy.

Chief Keith Smith, referred to page 271 of the City Budget book. He explained that the budget is relatively flat, as in previous years. He noted that the staffing level remains the same so Character 01 is basically unchanged other than the insurance premiums which have increased.

Councillor Mahern asked about Character 01, Subobject 185 (Worker's Compensation), noting that in 2005 they are only expected to spend \$6,888 and they have already spent it thus far. Chief Smith deferred to Jeff Seidenstein, Deputy Controller. Mr. Seidenstein explained that the City has been able to reduce the amount being charged back to all of the departments for Worker's Compensation.

Chief Smith discussed Character 02, Subobject 240 (Arsenal Supplies and Tools). There is an increase here due to the body armor vests that must be replaced on a timed basis. These normally run approximately \$400 each, and 10 are being replaced. He said that the rest of the Characters are self-explanatory.

Councillor Cockrum asked about Character 02, Subobjects 225 (Garage and Motor Supplies), 230 (Institutional, Medical, and Food Supplies), and 245 (Uniform and Personal Supplies) and asked why there is an increase. Chief Smith explained that the uniform budget also covers the reserve unit of 12 people, as well as a Boy Scout Explorers program.

Councillor Gibson stated that last year he contacted Major Hudson concerning some issues at Riverside Park. He asked what the relationship is between Park Rangers and the community, in particular with young adults, especially at Riverside and Wes Montgomery parks. Chief Smith explained there is a problem with "cruising" in the early Spring, in particular at Riverside, but for the most part the community seems to be appreciative of the Park Rangers' efforts. He feels there are no problems currently with Wes Montgomery Park. He added that the Park Rangers' presence is not always appreciated by all but they are trying to build a better relationship through visits at schools, etc.

Councillor Cockrum asked what is the current public safety situation with the shooting range by Eagle Creek Park. Mr. Wynns answered that DPR is working to resolve this issue with IPD and to get better public access. He said this is a requirement by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). He noted that the shooting range is constructed so that only half of it is enclosed which has allowed bullets to escape and land elsewhere. He added that there are more advanced weapons being used for shooting, which causes concern.

Chair Gray voiced one concern with the Park Rangers. He has problems with the rangers working off-duty in uniform and using vehicles during off-hours, and he would like to discuss this in the near future. Chief Smith said this would be duly noted.

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Parks and Recreation Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monroe Gray, Jr., Chairman
Parks and Recreation Committee